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BPA names round table to consider alternatives to transmission

PORTLAND, Ore. – The Bonneville Power Administration wants to make sure it provides the most cost-effective solutions for the region's transmission needs. To that end, BPA has invited a new round table of Northwest leaders to work with the agency on alternatives to building lines and other facilities where transmission system improvements are needed.

The 18 members from Northwest states, utilities, public interest groups and tribes will meet for the first time from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Jan. 22 at The Courtyard by Marriott in Portland, Ore.

BPA is facing challenges of an aging transmission system that is stretched to its limits in meeting today's demands. "Before we decide to build a line, we want to make sure BPA has fully considered whether nonconstruction alternatives can be used," said Vickie VanZandt, BPA vice president for transmission operations and planning. "We want to look at all options not just traditional construction."

The types of alternatives that will be explored by the new round table include energy efficiency programs, demand reduction initiatives, pricing strategies, and distributed generation, among other things.

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BPA commissioned a study in 2001 on how it could improve its transmission planning process. The firm Energy and Environmental Economics, with consultants Tom Foley and Eric Hirst, prepared the report called *Expansion of BPA Transmission Planning Capabilities: A Report on Non-Transmission Alternatives*. The study recommended enhancing BPA's transmission planning process and urged gathering insights and feedback from key regional representatives.

"We'll need broad-based understanding and support for this new approach to transmission planning," said Brian Silverstein, BPA transmission network planning manager. "The insights we gain from individual members of the round table will be valuable to both BPA and transmission planners throughout the region."

In seeking round table members, BPA included a broad range of knowledgeable and potentially affected stakeholders to discuss the nonconstruction alternative planning concept. "We're very pleased that these people have agreed to join us," said VanZandt. "We need key questions and potential alternatives examined early enough so we can use the results effectively," she added. "We hope the round table will help us with that as well as setting criteria that help determine when nonconstruction alternatives are feasible and when they are not."

BPA anticipates that the round table will meet quarterly over the next two to three years.

The report, *Expansion of BPA Transmission Planning Capabilities: A Report On Non-Transmission Alternatives*, is available on the web at:
http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/tblib/Publications/Infrastructure/BPA_TBL_Planning.pdf

Members of the BPA Nonconstruction Alternatives Round Table are:

Ken Canon	Executive Director, Industrial Customers of Northwest Utilities
Ralph Cavanagh	Co-Director, Energy Program, Natural Resources Defense Council
Art Compton	Administrator, Planning, Prevention and Assistance Division, Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Tom Foley	Consultant, Energy and Environmental Economics, Non-Wires Study
Nancy Hirsh	Policy Director, Northwest Energy Coalition
Hardev Juj	Director, Transmission and Distribution Planning, Seattle City Light
Robert Kahn	Executive Director, Northwest Independent Power Producers Coalition
Tom Karier	Council Member, Northwest Power Planning Council, Washington state
Paul Kjellander	President, Idaho Public Utilities Commission
Steve LaFond	Energy Resources Utilities Management, The Boeing Company
Sue McLain	Vice President of Operations- Delivery, Puget Sound Energy

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Kris Mikkelsen	Chief Executive Officer, Inland Power & Light Company
Bill Pascoe	Vice President of Transmission Operations, Northwestern Energy
Heather Rhoads-Weaver	- Executive Director & President, Northwest Sustainable Energy for Economic Development
John Savage	Director of Utility Programs, Oregon Public Utility Commission
Margie Schaff	Consultant, Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Economic Development Corporation
Brian Silverstein	Manager of Network Planning, Bonneville Power Administration
Dick Wanderscheid	Director, Electric and Telecommunications, City of Ashland

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